

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
AT GREENSBORO  
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Department of Biology

A study of the effects of the hormone thyroxine on the growth of the tadpoles of the frog, *Rana temporaria*. Betty E. Clark.

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HONORS PAPERS

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Greensboro, North Carolina

1968

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## CONTENTS

### Department of Art

A study of blackness.....Betty E. Cheek.

### Department of Biology

Effects of suboptimal temperature on cell division in human lymphocytes  
in vitro.....Mary Frances Ballance.

### Department of English

The rebel as tragic hero; a study of The Plague by Albert Camus,  
Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller....Betty Greenleaf Culbertson.

Tragedy in Malory's Morte D'Arthur.....Roberta Engleman.

The concept of rest in the poetry of George Herbert.....  
.....Katharine E. Gibbons.

A discussion of the Pearl stanza as an approach to the poem.....  
.....Jean Goodwin.

Indications of amorality.....Lynn Shearin Phillips.

Calculable fire, a collection of poems.....Susan Morrison Settlemyre.

### Department of Romance Languages

François Mauriac and the search for happiness....Martha Ann Crockett.

Love in Racine's Britannicus.....Katherine Rena Jones.

The Mexican Revolution as seen through the novelistic works of Martin  
Luis Guzmán.....Kathryn S. Ritchie.

A STUDY IN BLACKNESS

by

Betty E. Cheek

Submitted as an Honors Paper  
in the  
Department of Art  
(Under the Direction of the Department of Sociology)

The University of North Carolina  
at Greensboro  
1968

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
FORWARD.....	iii
Chapter	
I. MY SEARCH FOR IDENTITY: AN INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. OUT OF THE PAST.....	7
III. BLACK POWER.....	20
FOOTNOTES.....	37
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	40

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## FORWARD

"The only avenue towards  
wisdom is by freedom in  
the presence of knowledge."  
--Alfred North Whitehead

In times past, the senior honors thesis has been done in one's major area. I am deviating from this pattern; for though I am an art student, I have elected, with proper approval, to do my honors work within a sociological context, a field in which I have little background.<sup>1</sup> Many factors influenced my decision. The most important one, however, was my discovery that I am black, and that I am living in a racist, white, society. This discovery redefined my "major area" which at once expanded infinitely beyond the title of my academic pursuit. My major area became myself--my blackness: who I am; where I am; how do I live and why. For I had concerned myself too long with identity of white America. I learned, for example, in elementary school that it is Baby Sally, Dick, and Jane; in high school, that it is Patrick Henry; and now I find that it is congress and education. I am at once amazed and horrified to discover that it is entirely possible for me to complete 16 years of education, four of them at one of our best state universities, and not once encounter my own race as a significant studied part of the supposedly open social, economic, and political systems of this country. If I am, however, to have the knowledge that leads to wisdom, I must know who I am, and I must answer questions of identity from my own peculiar circumstance.

I discussed these feelings with Dr. Warren Ashby, Chairman of the Honors Council and Miss Mereb Mossman, Dean of Faculty. At that time I



was working in my major area as it is academically defined. I was tracing the Oriental influences in Cézanne's paintings. Yet, this topic seemed to lose its meaning when pitted against the enormous questions that were shaking my very being. How could I presume to study the Orient when my skin, my hair, my past, my people remained such a mystery? I wanted to study my people--black people in the United States, and I wanted Dr. Elaine Burgess, a prominent sociologist in race relations, to direct me. Dr. Ashby suggested that I discuss my dissatisfaction with Mr. Gilbert Carpenter, my director at that time. He also stated that if Mr. Carpenter and Dr. Burgess agreed, a change of topics would be acceptable. Both Mr. Carpenter and Dr. Burgess to whom Dean Mossman had pleaded my case, listened to my problem with great compassion, and agreed to help in any way possible. It was decided that my honors work would be considered a special interests project under the auspices of the Art Department, but under the direction of Dr. Burgess.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Dr. Warren Ashby, Mr. Gilbert Carpenter, and Dr. Elaine Burgess for their support; and to Dean Mereb Mossman I offer a special thanks for the interest she displayed. Without them, my project and my present self would not have been possible.

## CHAPTER I

### MY SEARCH FOR IDENTITY: AN INTRODUCTION

The cry "Black Power" signifies a new thrust in the perennial Negro Protest Movement. Having arisen only in the past two years, it has quickly pushed racial conflict in this country to new heights. Perhaps for the first time black/white relations have reached a turning point; for the impact of this new ideology tells us that very soon we must decide whether black people will ultimately be destroyed or whether constructive societal shifts will occur which will permit them to participate fully in this society.

Tantamount to the impact of the Black Power ideology upon the total society is its particular significance to black people. Certainly it cannot be isolated from the continuum of Negro protest as a peculiar phenomenon. On the contrary, it is a very natural extension of Negro protest which has roots extending even through slavery. In fact, much of its ideology is mere paraphrasing of earlier race leaders such as Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, and more recently Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X. The ideas of Black Power are not important because they are new or unique, but because they are relatively widespread and accepted. The significant question, then, is why these ideas are so readily accepted by many people, and why the heightened militancy should occur at this particular time.

There are many ways in which these questions can be approached, and perhaps answered. A scholarly approach alone, while academically sound,



cannot say enough of the daily identity crisis that so many black persons in this country face. For in this time, at this place, schoolastics are divided into strict, unnatural units which can never present an integrated picture of the drama of living. They cannot explore deeply enough the agony of tensions within the movement itself, and within the young, black militants who form the bulk of its base and leadership. A scholarly approach would therefore neglect Dago, one of the most seriously militant students at the black state university. He is beautiful--tall, rangy, very black, and wears his hair in an impressive African bush. He is angry most of the time. Dago hates white people, he says. He would like to be violent. His roommate (by choice) and his woman are white.

Most of all, however, a scholarly approach would neglect me. And this is my story too.

I, Betty Cheek, a Black woman in my twentieth year, with no history that I can discern in the annals of my education, do hereby declare my senior honors project to be a study in Blackness, under the direction of Dr. Elaine Burgess, a white woman, conducted at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a white school.

This study, however, will not be a mere journal; for a record of personal feeling or experience unaccompanied by analytical thinking and objective study easily becomes hysterical. These qualities in combination, though, can produce the ideal goal of education--wisdom. This paper, then, will be a synthesis of academic and personal probing, and of the conflict that sometimes lies between.

The main body of the paper is found in Chapters II and III. Chapter II deals with the development of the Negro Protest Movement and the re-

curring strains within it. Chapter III deals with the ideology of the Black Power phase of Negro protest and how it evolved from the litigation and non-violent phases of the past three decades. Interspersed throughout are my own feelings and reactions which are only part of the similar feelings of thousands of young black people desperately searching for their identity and, yes, for total freedom.



This is me.

This is my children.

This is you.



This is me.

This is my children.

This is you.



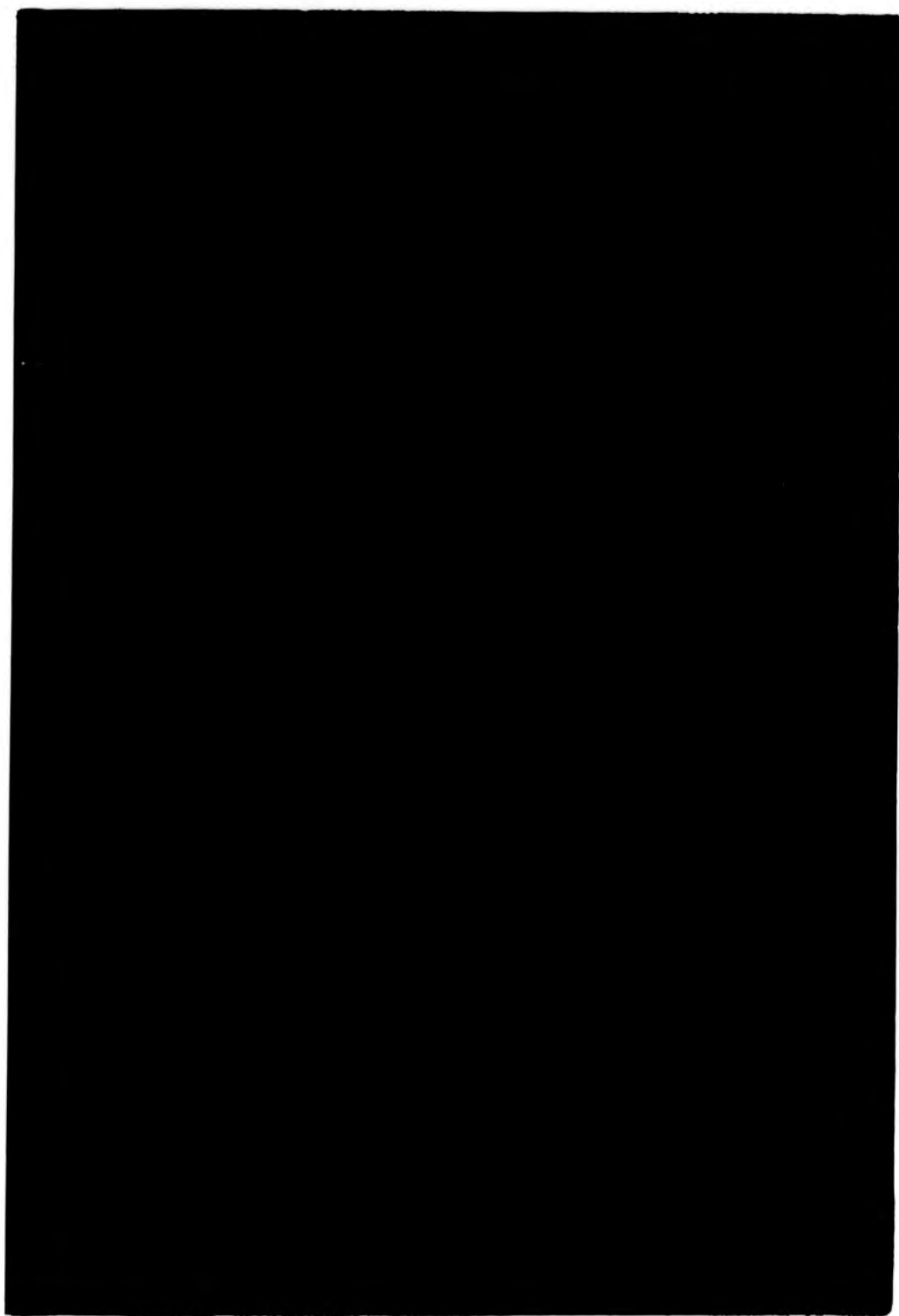
I am the seed of W. E. B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, of Stokely Carmichael and The American Dream. If you do not bear my babies too, America, as you have born the bastard sons of countless others,

I and mine will murder you.

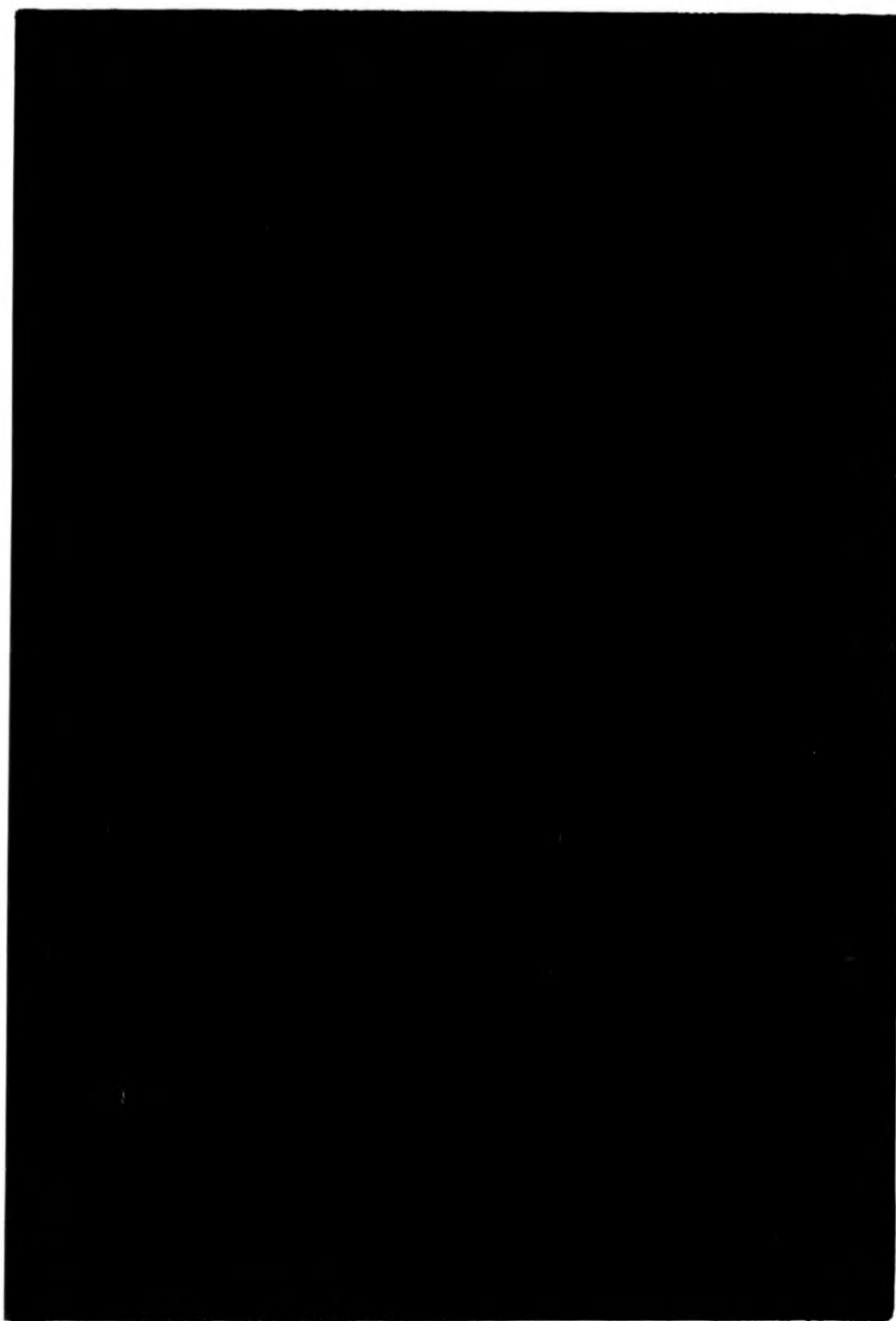
1. Over thirty-three percent of all Negro children are growing up in broken homes.<sup>2</sup>
2. Forty percent of all jobs held by Negro men in 1960 were as unskilled laborers or as service workers.<sup>3</sup>
3. "\$2,400 is the average annual wage of all non-white nonfarm laborers."<sup>4</sup>
4. "\$2,500 is the average annual wage for all non-white service workers."<sup>5</sup>
5. "A non-white man must have between one and three years of college before he can expect to earn as much as a white man with less than eight years of schooling, over the course of their respective working lives."<sup>6</sup>

(ain't that a gas, baby? ain't that a gas?)

WHAT! SAY YOU NOW THAT MY PEOPLE THEY'RE DYING?







## CHAPTER II

### OUT OF THE PAST

The Negro Protest Movement is an ever growing phenomenon that gains momentum with each decade. It has taken many different and often contradictory approaches, yet none of its manifestations can be isolated as a unique phenomenon. The Black Power militancy of current times is no exception. Its foundation rests firmly upon the peaceful protest of the 1950's and early 1960's, the many litigations of the 1940's, the black labor movement of the 1930's, and the Garvey nationalist movement of the 1920's. For, as early as 1917 Marcus Garvey was preaching black pride and black unity in the streets of Harlem.<sup>7</sup> And A. Phillip Randolph in the 1920's was uniting black workers.<sup>8</sup> We are witnessing, not the onslaught of radically new ideas, but a synthesis of the black identity theme of lower class movements with the intellectualizations of middle and upper class movements. The Black Power ideology borrows and combines from these heretofore disparate groups, ideas that may prove to be the most effective to date in uniting the lower, middle and upper classes. This unity is far from a reality, but its beginnings can hardly be denied.

To understand the significance and the component parts of this ideological synthesis, it is necessary to examine the past major phases of the Negro Protest Movement. Originally, protest was almost exclusively an upper and middle class phenomenon.<sup>9</sup> At the turn of the century, the two most important Negro leaders, W. E. B. DuBois, an upper class (and Harvard educated) intellectual, and Booker T. Washington,

the most powerful Negro in America, were engaged in fierce debate over means toward equality. Washington advocated accommodation to disenfranchisement and discrimination, and suggested that black people concentrate on vocational education, thrift, and the Protestant Ethic:

As soon as our race gets property in the form of real estate, of intelligence, of high Christian character, it will find that it is going to receive the recognition which it has not thus far received.<sup>10</sup>

W. E. B. DuBois, on the other hand, advocated continuous agitation for full political, and social rights. The Declaration of Principles of the Niagara Movement which DuBois organized states:

...we believe that this class of American citizens [black people] should protest emphatically and continually against the curtailment of their political rights.

We believe also in protest against the curtailment of our civil rights. All American citizens have the right to equal treatment in places of public accommodation according to their behavior and deserts.<sup>11</sup>

Both of these men found their following among the more advantaged, articulate Negroes, though Washington's program was seemingly designed for the lower classes. Neither man made ideological appeals to the bulk of lower class Negroes to gain a mass following. Many of DuBois' ideas were, in fact, discouraging:

From the very first it has been the educated and intelligent of the Negro people that have led and elevated the mass...

The problem of education, then, among Negroes must first of all deal with the Talented Tenth...<sup>12</sup>

Though in truth the educated and intelligent did provide protest leaders,

such a statement could hardly appeal to, or enlist support from, the lower classes who formed the bulk of the black population and whose needs had yet to be articulated.

A leader for the lower classes did not emerge until the 1920's. The context in which he arose must first be examined. World War I had brought countless numbers of southern, rural Negroes to the promised land of the North, eager to find the employment in industries and equality of treatment of which they had heard. Over one half-million Negroes migrated to northern metropolitan areas during and after World War I.<sup>13</sup> Uneducated, full of illusions, and unsophisticated, they were totally unprepared for the conditions that faced them. Family ties were broken; traditional organizations such as the community and the church no longer played important roles. Nor was there the equality of opportunity and employment for the asking. Negro males suffered most, for females could nearly always find employment as domestic workers. Unemployment increased frustration among the males who often abandoned their wives and children, thus contributing further to the disorganization of the already disintegrating family.<sup>14</sup> E. Franklin Frazier describes the situation thusly:

The migrants, both in and out of the churches [were] freed from the control exercised by the church and other forms of neighborhood organizations in the South...tradition and sentiment no longer furnish [ed] a guide to living...<sup>15</sup>

Rapid urbanization, however, with its superior communication and exposure to the dominant culture had another effect upon the migrants which Frazier also describes:



"Doubt Session" discussing the plight  
of black people  
— May, 1968



...contacts and competition with whites in the North causes them to lose the provincial community and religious consciousness that had enveloped them in the South and quickened in them a racial consciousness that they had never known.<sup>16</sup>

It was in this climate of despair and consciousness that Marcus Garvey, the only black nationalist with a significant lower class following, rose to power. Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association "collected more money and claimed a larger membership than any other Negro group either before or since," according to Edmund Cronon.<sup>17</sup> What was the source of Garvey's success? How had he managed to capture the imagination of the masses when more stable organizations such as the N. A. A. C. P., then under the leadership of W. E. B. DuBois, had failed? The answer in its simplest form is that Garvey spoke to the heartfelt needs of the masses of these displaced people. When they felt most worthless and down trodden he shouted:

Up you mighty race!...Be as proud of your race today as our fathers were in the days of yore. We have a beautiful history, and we shall create another in the future that will astonish the world.<sup>18</sup>

The problems of the black masses lent themselves well to Garvey's program. He glorified the black man, not the "Mulatto" or "high yaller" that had traditionally received the benefits of color stratification.

(Yellow, Yellow kiss a fellow. Brown, Brown let's go down town. Black, Black, get back!!)

Garvey also provided groups with titles such as the Black Cross Nurses, The African Legion, and the Sublime Order of the Nile.<sup>19</sup> These titles and exhortations were essential to the building of a positive



self image and the restoration of a sense of dignity, both of which were more damaged among the lower classes of black people than any other group. Upper and middle class Negroes can more successfully use avoidance techniques as a response to discrimination.<sup>20</sup> The lower classes, however, must come in contact with abuses and insults from the white world each day. For they are usually totally dependent upon it.<sup>21</sup> Thomas Pettigrew explains the results of these experiences in his Profile of the American Negro quite succinctly:

...identity problems are inextricably linked with problems of self esteem. For years Negro Americans have had little else to judge themselves by than the second-class status assigned them in America. And along with this inferior treatment their ears have been filled with the din of white racists...insisting that Caucasians are innately superior to Negroes.<sup>22</sup>

The confusion of self-identity and lowering of self esteem are two of the most serious marks of oppression upon the Negro American personality.<sup>23</sup>

It is precisely this lower class group to which the glorification of blackness and the rebuilding of the self image is most important. Garvey provided relief for their "marks of oppression." He gave the black man a history, a sense of identity with Africa, the motherland. This ideology of racial pride was the most significant part of the Garvey Movement. The masses of Negroes suffered greatly from family disorganization, lack of cultural unity or clannishness (which became even more necessary in urban centers where politics and economics are drawn along ethnic lines) and the general frustration that came from being penalized for being black.<sup>24</sup> Garvey's movement provided an organization with which people could identify and which could serve as a stabilizing factor in their lives. It also provided a base for

cultural unity by emphasizing a common African heritage.

Garvey, however, made a number of serious mistakes which spelled disaster for his movement. He consistently alienated himself from many of the intellectuals of the middle class whom he ridiculed as betrayers of the Negro race simple because in many cases they were "mulattoes."<sup>25</sup> This irrational dislike and distrust of "mulattoes" was Garvey's undoing, for a majority of the most influential Negro leaders such as W. E. B. DuBois, were of "mixed" ancestry. Garvey needed the educational capacities, the organizational and financial skills of men of this caliber. By attacking them, he only gained their animosity. The results of this loss of talent were reflected in the bankruptcy of his organization.

Another factor in Garvey's demise was his unsophisticated dealings in international politics. At a time when there were no independent black nations and Africa was dominated by European colonial governments, Garvey was preaching Pan Africanism. This certainly did nothing to endear him to British and French governments who were most anxious to keep their colonies peaceful and docile.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, however, has quite a different history. Begun in 1909, it was (and continues to be) composed primarily of the middle class whose goals and interests are quite different from those of the lower classes. Whereas the lower classes are primarily interested in better housing, employment opportunities, and higher pay, the middle class is most interested in ending segregation which denies them the status which they have achieved. Sitting at desegregated lunch counters or attending integrated schools, however, does not begin to touch the problems of the

lower class--the bulk of the Negro population.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, class antagonisms among Negroes compound the problem by widening the gap. Lower class blacks tend to be suspicious toward middle and upper class blacks because they feel that a rise in status indicates a betrayal of poorer Negroes to white exploiters.<sup>27</sup> Middle and upper class Negroes, on the other hand, try to disassociate themselves from the masses of the lower class; they feel that the high crime rate, illegitimacy, and illiteracy are an "embarrassment to the race," and that in the struggle for advancement it is essential for white people to know that "all Negroes aren't like that."<sup>28</sup>

(Betty, honey, when you go to school up at UNC-G, you must watch yourself very carefully, and never do anything that would disgrace the race. They are all hoping that you will do something--just one thing--that will let them classify you as just another low-class nigger.)

This divisiveness has characterized all phases of the Negro Protest Movement since its inception. It is fairly easy to trace these major strains through Negro protest in our century and label them lower or middle class. Following the Garvey Movement in thought has been the Black Muslims, a quasi-religious and nationalistic group founded in the 1930's with few actual members (because of its rigid standards of conduct), but many sympathizers; and the March on Washington Movement, an organization led by A. Phillip Randolph during World War II whose focus at its zenith was protesting discrimination in defense jobs and in the armed forces by marching on Washington, D. C.

Following the ideology of the N. A. A. C. P. has been the Urban League, and until 1966 the Congress of Racial Equality. Each of these organizations as founded and led by integrated groups were middle class,

status oriented. They frowned upon emotional appeals and fanfare glamor that traditionally won the support of the lower class masses. Their sentiments are perhaps best expressed by Gunnar Myrdal who wrote:

It should be born in mind that the easiest means of rallying Negroes into a mass movement are such that they would destroy the organization. The Garvey movement demonstrated that the Negro masses can best be stirred into unity by an irrational and intensely racial, emotional appeal...<sup>29</sup>

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)--began in 1957 by Martin Luther King as an outgrowth of the Montgomery bus boycott, and organized for the non-violent demonstrations of the early 1960's--has more than any previous organization attempted to bridge this class gap by involving many of the working and lower classes.<sup>30</sup> Having as its leadership a loose confederation of ministers in the rural and urban areas of the South, it has been more able to accommodate class exchanges and differences.<sup>31</sup> Perhaps it was the continuing crisis situations that enabled the SCLC to accomplish this--boycotts, freedom rides, sit-ins, the March on Washington, the Poor People's March. Certainly the fact that Martin Luther King, head of SCLC, met his death during his participation in a garbage collector's strike in Memphis, Tennessee gives eloquent testimony to the goals and ideals of this organization.

The SCLC has its limitations, however. Recently, the centers of most severe racial conflict have been in Northern urban areas--the ghettos. There both the SCLC and Dr. King seemed to have little influence. (The apparent failures of SCLC's Chicago ventures are illustrative.) These certainly are the areas that most need organizational guidance for redress of grievances. Yet, the SCLC with its non-violent philosophy



and its emphasis on the church and Christianity, is not equipped to speak to the needs of the volatile, secular ghetto dwellers, who now help initiate and sustain the ghetto rebellions.

It has become apparent in recent years that neither orientation--middle nor lower class--can ultimately succeed alone. (Even the SCLC does not yet include enough of the lower class.) Both types, however, have made amazing inroads for the struggle of black people. How could we have had laws passed striking down legal discrimination had it not been for the endless litigations and documentations of the N. A. A. C. P. and the Urban League? And how could we have known that jet, black, tight-taut, coil-curly springing from ebony skins are beautiful had it not been for Marcus Garvey and Malcolm X?

(My little sister burst into tears yesterday because her hair would not swing like the girls' on television. She is only seven. How long, oh Lord, how long...)

There must be a marriage of method. For threats of marches and boycotts by the middle class do no good unless black brothers in the ghettos help carry them out. And broken windows and burned businesses shriek incoherently unless the black brothers in the \$40,000 split level homes give order to the words.

We have found that racism in this country is institutional, and that it may be found in every aspect of our national life.<sup>32</sup> There must be unity among all black people in the United States to create a revolution which will eliminate racism for according to Thomas Pettigrew:

To become a full fledged revolution...the movement has to incorporate all elements of the Negro community.<sup>33</sup>



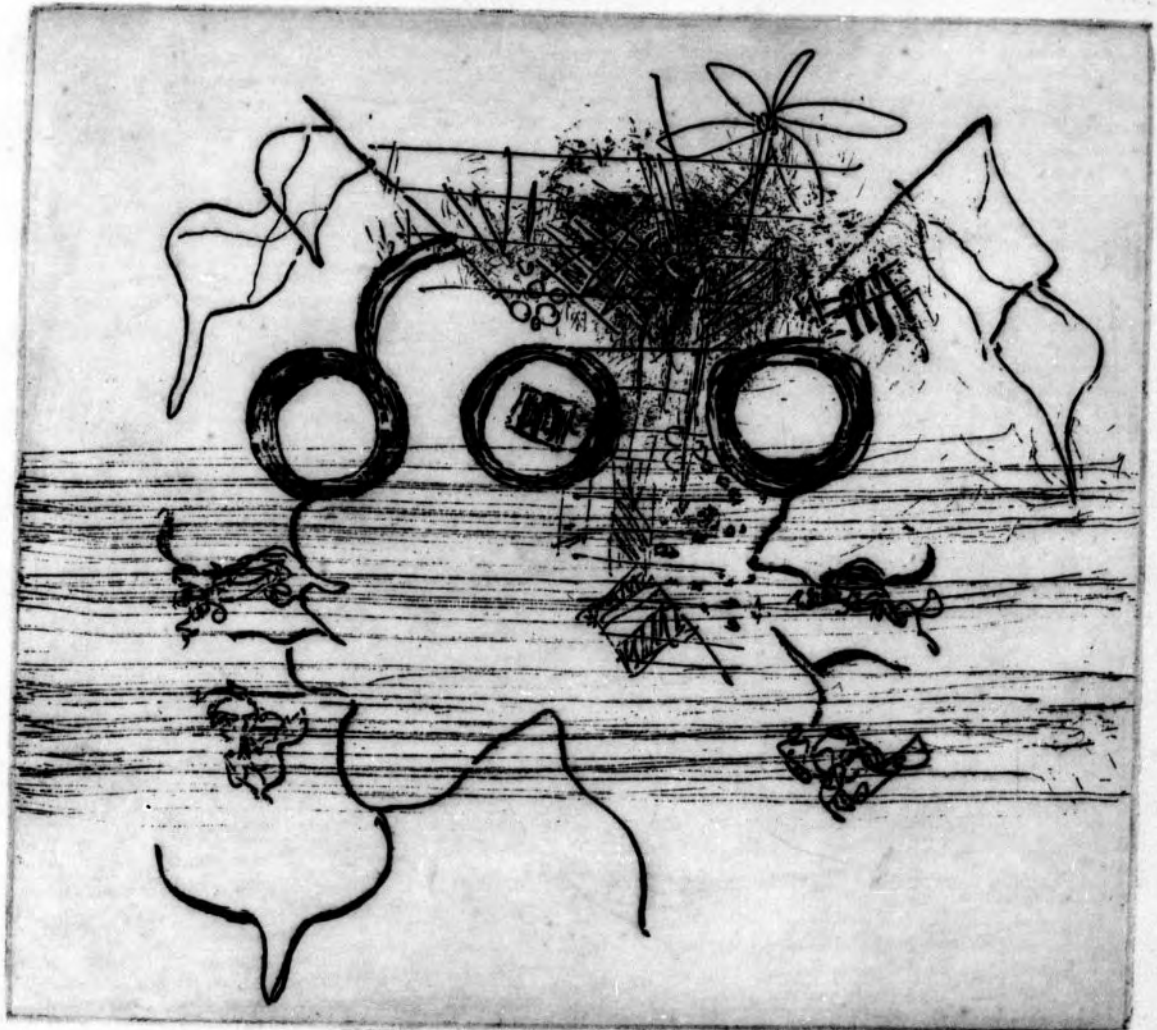
Orangeburg Massacre  
Protest Meeting  
Feb., 1968



Marcus Garvey did much, but not enough. The N. A. A. C. P. did much, but, again, not enough. Garvey's movement lacked the intellectual organizational skills necessary for a strong, continuing organization. The N. A. A. C. P. lacked the fervor to see with the heart's eye the agony of the ghetto; and therefore lacked the words that would draw the masses into it. The SCLC has begun the bridge that must be built, but it remains incomplete.

(We all suffer, dear God. Even big daddy Powell. And I suppose, Thurgood. And we all know the insanity underneath.)

There must be a marriage!



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### CHAPTER III

#### BLACK POWER

(May, 1968)

.....Before revising this section, which concerns itself chiefly with my interpretation and reaction to the Black Power ideology, I heard a young and excruciatingly sensitive white girl eloquently defend her people from the catagorical condemnation by my people. "I did not enslave your people," She said. "I was not holding the gun that killed Martin Luther King! How can you condemn me? How can you attack me for what my ancestors did?" (And I heard with her words the echo of my own insistent voice from years past:

I do not stink! I do not carry knives and slur my words, and get drunk on weekends. How can you condemn me for what my ancestors were, or what some of us still are...)

Perhaps, for a moment, I was touched. I can't be quite sure. All I remember now is the laughter that bubbled and raked its way out. "WHERE WERE YOU FIVE YEARS AGO, BABY? We could have grooved." But qualitative judgments were not in vogue then, (do you remember, baby, do you remember?); I have not forgotten.....

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My discussion of the Black Power Movement and ideology is, in many ways, a personal account. It is impossible at this time to have a complete overview of this phase of protest, for adequate scholarly research and

codification has not yet been done. There are many strange, varying, and often contradictory facets of this "new" emphasis. Each class and age group interprets this new doctrine according to its own needs (or lack of them). I, of course, am not immune. I am the young, black, "intellectual" who grew up amidst marches, sit-ins, and demonstrations. I heard the admonitions of my elders when they told me to uphold the Negro race by proving that I was not like those dirty, low-class Negroes down the road. I heard the promises of great white schools and employers when they told me to educate myself so that they could find a qualified, personable Negro when the time came....I am the disillusioned, young, black, intellectual.

I am attracted to the strain of Black Power advocated by Stokely Carmichael who popularized the phrase. His premise:

Before a group can enter the open society, it must first close ranks.<sup>34</sup>

This thinking is directed mostly to lower class blacks who indeed have not entered the open society. There is much evidence to support the validity of this temporary separation as advocated by many of the young black intellectuals of the day. In describing the special handicaps under which Negroes in urban centers operate, Nathan Glazer and Patrick Moynihan state:

Negroes...did not develop the same kind of clannishness, they did not have the same close family ties, that in other groups created little pools for ethnic businessmen and professionals to tap...

Without a special language and culture, and without the historical experiences that create an elan and a morale, what is there to lead them to build their own life...<sup>35</sup>





Ron Karenga  
 Congress for the Unity of Black Students  
 —April, 1968

Because the family is a basic unit of social organization, the black masses are at an extreme disadvantage. Obviously, this area must be improved first or in immediate conjunction with other areas. "Only a minority--less than half--of all Negro children reach the age of 18 having lived all their lives with both of their parents."<sup>36</sup> Most times the father is absent. This has a profound and lasting effect upon the development of the child--particularly the black male child; he has no model after which to pattern himself, and he is often reared by a hostile mother who knows from experience that "men are no good." According to the Moynihan report, this type of family disintegration stems from:

...centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from long years of degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to provide for his family.<sup>37</sup>

(Daddy was an electrician by trade. --an intelligent man. He was fired from his job in Philadelphia because he proved more able than his supervisor. He returned to the South, to his home and found that North Carolina wouldn't issue him a license...)

There are those who would belittle the seriousness of the problem by saying that the masses of black people do not have a weak family, they merely have a matrifocal family pattern or a pattern of plural monogamy i.e., a rapid succession of husbands, or wives, which differs from the norm. Yet, if this is examined we will find that a matrifocal pattern did not arise naturally from the black masses, but rather was the forced result of a system of slavery which recognized no marriages, and which sold husbands, wives, and children away from each other until the institution of marriage as we know it was virtually non-existent.<sup>38</sup> Neither



does the theory of plural monogamy survive careful scrutiny. Elliot Liebow who recently conducted a study of street corner men in Washington, D. C. tells us that though his sample was small he found that plural monogamy was not an accepted way of life; that, rather the end of each marriage constituted a failure in itself. For all of the men were well aware of the larger societal norm which says a man must support and be responsible for his family.<sup>39</sup> It was only after these men had learned through bitter experience that they could not support families on their meager or non-existent incomes that they gave up.

Moynihan and Glazer suggest still another handicap which prevents black people from developing the strong political, social, and economic organizations that lead to high group status:

Negro communal organization is weak and insufficient to make much impact on the great needs of poorer and disorganized parts of the community.<sup>40</sup>

These weaknesses--family structure and lack of sense of ethnicity are fundamental problems which must be dealt with before future forms of litigation or superimposed self-help programs can be successful. Efforts to improve the lot of black people which do not take these factors into consideration invariably miss the mark, though they may make valuable contributions.

The Black Power thrust of the Negro Protest Movement recognized these problems and attempts to provide solutions. By emphasizing African origins and culture it attempts to forge a common bond of unity among black people. Charles Hamilton and Stokely Carmichael in their book Black Power say:

We believe it absolutely necessary to challenge Anglo-conformity and other prevailing norms and institutions.<sup>41</sup>

They would substitute, as Garvey tried to do, an African orientation which would glorify blackness and Afro-Americans as a group. This would serve a valuable purpose in increasing pride and promoting a positive self-image. Does Stokely Carmichael's brand of black pride, however, have any better chance of surviving than did Garvey's? Surely the world situation in which it is promoted is more conducive. Within the past ten years twenty independent, black nations have emerged from Africa. And they have delegates in the United Nations to whom all respects are paid.<sup>42</sup> Certainly this has had an effect upon the attitudes of Afro-Americans toward Africa.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, the Pan-Africanism once mouthed only by Garvey and a few others is now a widespread idea in Africa. These incidents have done much to make Afro-Americans look twice at their once ridiculed motherland.

(Betty! Betty! You'd better come into this house. Out there yelling and screaming just like an African!)

There are those who would argue against this culture forging technique by questioning the validity of such cultural links. There is, in fact, very little left of the African cultural heritage in the United States. Yet when we examine its organizational value we find that this technique created for Garvey the largest mass movement among Afro-Americans in history.<sup>44</sup> The masses of black people respond to this ideology. It helps create that feeling of ethnicity which Glazer and Moynihan say is so important for a rise in group status.

Another factor that will affect the survival of this phase of black

nationalism is the participation of the middle class which has grown considerably since the twenties. This phase of Negro protest is led and dominated by young people as was protest during the early 60's. When we examine the general status of this group we find that many of them, particularly the leaders, are solidly middle class. According to Kenneth Clark:

One of the more intriguing facts of the present struggle of Negro young people for positive self-esteem is that the struggle is no longer restricted to lower class Negro youth, taking the form of hostility, aggression, and delinquency usually associated with the most oppressed Negroes. There are many indications that a substantial proportion of middle and upper middle-class Negro youth have become a part of the pervasive psychological and ideological revolt against racism and social hypocrisy.<sup>45</sup>

Certainly the growing presence of Afro-American (black identity) clubs on college campuses--from Harvard and Yale in New England to Taladega and Tuskegee in the Deep South, from the University of Kansas in the Midwest to San Francisco State College on the Pacific Coast--are incisive evidence of this fact.

(There must be something to combat the pervasive whiteness of our environment here at UNC-G! Mark Twain's Nigger Jim is the closest most students get to finding a black person as the object of an academic study.)

Another factor which may contribute to the Black Power ideological survival is that it is not dependent upon the existence of any one organization or one leader as was Marcus Garvey's movement. Leadership is diffused, and organizing is done locally. This arrangement has obvious advantages. There is not the danger of one man's irrational prejudices and personality problems (as Garvey's hatred of "mulattoes")



State wide meeting of  
Black Students  
— March, 1968



thwarting its success.

Along with building a sense of enthusiasm, the most significant contribution of the Black Power phase of protest is that it is raising the status of the Negro male. The abandonment of non-violent principles more than any other factor is creating this change. The very rhetoric of violence puts the male in the forefront of the movement as leader, aggressor, protector. And this position he guards jealously. At a strategy meeting planning a march to protest the Orangeburg Massacre I heard this:

All right! Every man will march with a woman except those in the first three rows. The first three rows will be filled with the biggest, blackest meanest niggus we can find. (laughter) You guys with the women, I guess we don't have to say that if any honkey even looks at your woman wrong, we beat ass.

How vastly different from the early 60's. There was, at strategy meetings of that era, none of the cocky, arrogance that now means freedom from fear of white attacks, and, more importantly, freedom from three hundred years of feminine domination. Now, there is man talk. Women have their own talk and their own place. During the Black Power Forum here at UNC-G in November, one of the young speakers led me aside and said:

Look, I know you girls are our hostess dinner companions, and I want you to know that we appreciate all the attention. But right now there are some very important things we have to discuss. Why don't you all take the table over there? (This, as a command!) You'll probably find your own conversation more interesting anyway.

Sometimes this new dominance becomes absolute. During a state wide meeting of students campaigning for Dr. Reginald Hawkins, a black man



running for governor of North Carolina, attire for girls participating in the planned rallies was being discussed. A young man stood up, faced us squarely and delivered the final remark:

Mini skirts! OUR WOMEN WILL NOT WEAR MINI SKIRTS.  
Let those honkey broads with their flat behinds  
show their legs. They need to! Our women have  
enough going for them already. If anything, you'll  
wear long, African dress.

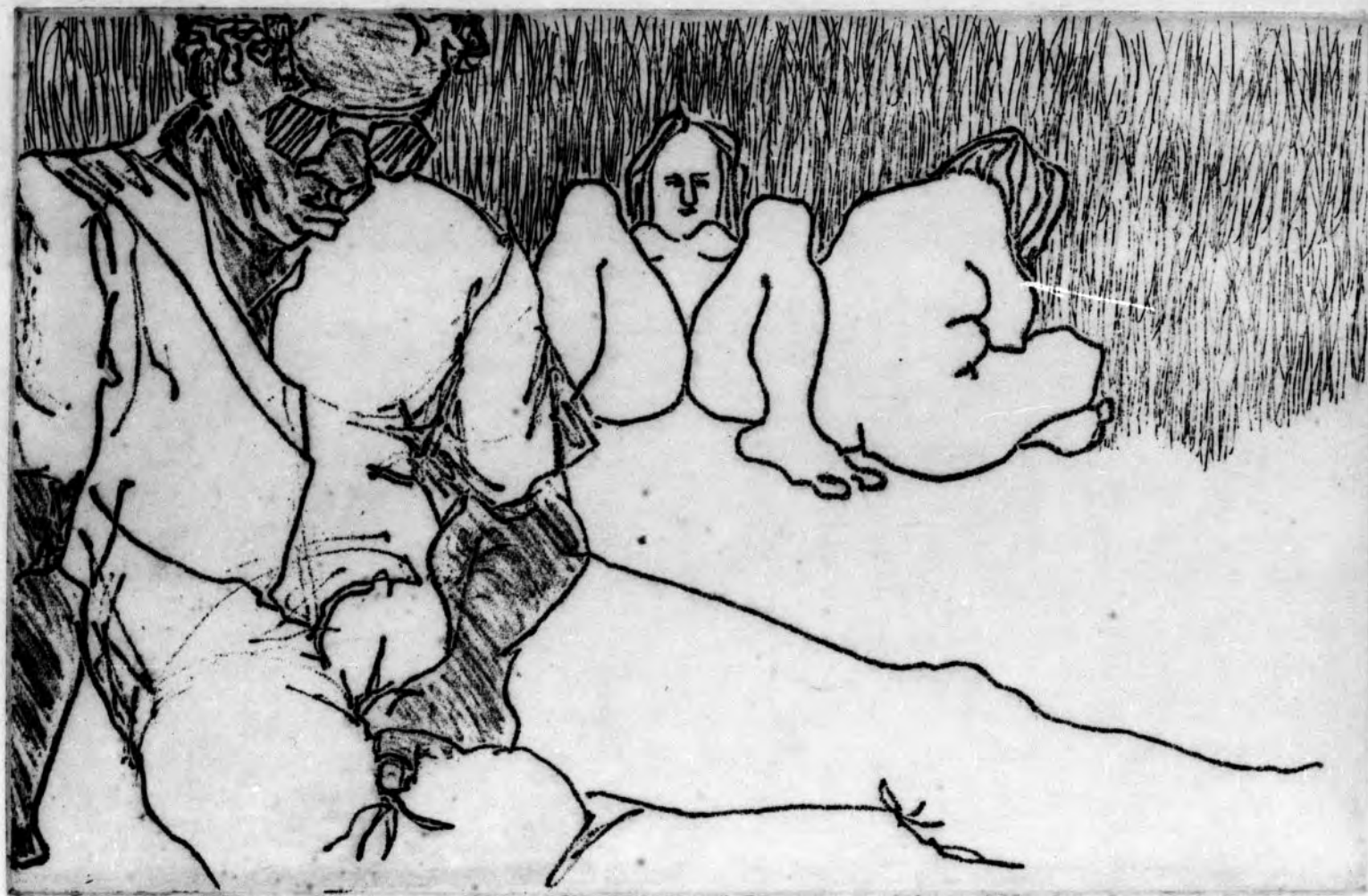
(If it will help my sons to become men, yes, I will bow to this authority.)

Perhaps, soon, the Negro male will begin to accept this new dominant position as his unquestioned, natural right. Then the "sanctity" of white flesh for which he was castrated will no longer fascinate him. He will no longer need to destroy the myth of white womanhood by seducing as many white woman as he possibly can. The mysteries of straight hair and colorless skin will no longer be explored and exploited for their own sake. Perhaps, too, he will no longer need to surround himself with white people at whom he can lash out to reassert his aggressiveness in a confused love/hate relationship.

(Oh, Dago, Dago, I am sorry.)

The focus of Black Power, then, is clearly black people. It speaks to their needs. It does not, as a solution, court the white man's favor or approval. This is the crucial difference between the Black Power thrust and the peaceful protest phase of the early 1960's.

It is necessary at this point, then, to examine the characteristics and techniques of Negro protest in the early 60's. For these elements would explain in some degree how a philosophy of peaceful resistance gave



phase III cont!

botychoek

birth to the violence and militancy of today.

When I examined the literature of that era--both academic and journalistic--I found that much of it, though, by no means all, deals with the relationship of black leaders to white leaders, rather than of black leaders to black people.<sup>46</sup> For protest was directed toward changing the relationship of black people to white people via legislation and civil disobedience rather than toward changing the relationship of black social classes one to another via strong communal organization, a sense of self-determination, and unity. Of course, organizing for effective civil disobedience resulted in strengthening the solidarity of the black community. However, this unity was for the purpose of confronting the white community. It did not seek to change the basic weaknesses of the black community such as broken families and the lack of cohesiveness.

This approach to racial conflict left much to be desired; for it described the problem of the Negro in America as "the white man's problem."<sup>47</sup> Most efforts, therefore, went toward making the white man aware of his problem--of the inconsistencies between his Constitution and his actions, of his violent, often barbaric behavior, of his inability to cope with well behaved, peaceful marchers who sought only justice and equality. All of this was valuable, of course. But it did not begin to touch the real problems of the black community nor to anticipate the extent of racism in the white community. There was a near childlike faith in the Federal government's ability to correct things.<sup>48</sup> Only after faith had been lost in the ability of the Federal government to effect significant change did the focus of Negro protest change. When the civil rights bill of 1963, along with other legislation, proved to

be too slow, black people began to realize the limitations of legislation and to look for another approach.

The shift from a non-violent to a violent philosophy resulted from similar disillusionment. Peaceful marches were consistently met with violent rebuffs, and the victims were women (sometimes pregnant), children, old men, and young, non-violent men who watched helplessly. This non-violent philosophy was functional, however. It demonstrated that all Negroes were not ruffians who carried knives. At a time when protest was aimed primarily at desegregation, this was important. Moreover, a non-violent philosophy enabled the church to play a significant role as an organizational ground. Even the non-violent philosophy, however, did not keep some of the church sisters from reminiscing:

Lordy, I remember just as good as it was yesterday,--'bout Willie Jones and Mr. Percy Harrington, Jr. Chile, Mr. Percy raped young, black girls whenever he took the notion. And there wasn't a thing nobody could do about it. Well, one day Mr. Percy took Willie Jones' lil' sister back of the barn--in broad daylight. And Willie heard 'bout it. Now, Willie he sho' set some sto' by that chile. Well suh, Willie come chargin' 'round the back of that barn and dragged Mr. Percy right off of that girl. And 'fo anybody could say nary a word--an' I ain't so sho' they want to nohow--Willie had dragged Mr. Percy over to the chopin' block and cut his head clean from his body. While, all of us just stood round and watched that white man jumpin' and thumpin' on the ground just like a chicken ain't quite dead. Cose, the Ku Klux come git Willie the next day. But, girl, whenever I gits to feelin' bad 'bout dese white folks, I just think 'bout that Mr. Percy thumpin' and jumpin', and the s'prised look on his chopped off head. And girl, I laughs.<sup>49</sup>

The non-violent philosophy is that of a people who have not quite come into their own; for, as Aaron Waldavsky states:





"And I laughed"



The emphasis of the civil rights movement on non-violence was unnatural. It reassured whites and helped get bills on voting rights passed in congress. But it left no place for self defense.<sup>50</sup>

The non-violent philosophy is also, as E. Franklin Frazier stated several years ago, that of a people who have not yet learned the redemptive quality of hate:

...if the masses of Negroes can save their self-respect and remain free of hate, so much the better, but...I believe it would be better for the Negro's soul to be seared with hate than dwarfed by self-abasement.<sup>51</sup>

Maybe the non-violent philosophy is that of a people who have not yet learned the enormity of the often futile struggle for freedom, justice, and equality, and are not quite aware of the history of horror this struggle holds. When the freedom schools for black children in Tennessee were closed last summer because they were "teaching hate", a college student from Alabama shook his head in disgust:

Man, oh, man, these white folk! When you say your mother was raped, your father lynched, and your land stolen, they say you "teachin' hate". Man, you ain't got to teach hate. All you got to do is tell it like it is.<sup>52</sup>

Or maybe the non-violent philosophy is that of men who have not been allowed their masculinity--who have not yet learned that when their children are bombed, they should KILL; that when they are chewed unjustly by police dogs, they should KILL; that when their pregnant wives are kicked in the stomach by the county Sheriff, they should KILL.

(Martin Luther King, where are you?)

The acceptance of violent racial conflict as a possible means to freedom is born of the same disillusionment that led to the abandonment of litigation as the dominant emphasis of protest. Appeals to the white man's conscience through redemptive, undeserved suffering did not correct injustice. A new approach was needed.

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up

like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore--

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over--

like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

--Langston Hughes<sup>53</sup>



Y/S

yeah!

bettycheek



YIS

yeah!

better head





#### FOOTNOTES

1. Before taking Race and Culture Contact (soc. 327) I had only studied the introductory course to sociology.
2. Lee Rainwater and William Yancey, The Moynihan Report and The Politics of Controversy (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1967), p. 64. (This is on page 18 of the original report published under the title of The Negro Family: The Case for Natural Action, U. S. Department of Labor, 1965.)
3. Elliot Liebow, Tally's Corner (Boston, Mass.: Little, Brown & Co., 1967), p. 51.
4. Ibid., p. 51.
5. Ibid.
6. Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton, Black Power: The Patterns of Liberation in America (New York, N. Y.: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1967), p. 19.
7. Edmund Cronon, Black Moses (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1955), p. 41.
8. Hubert Garfinkel, When Negroes March (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1959), p. 187.
9. Francis Broderick and August Mier eds., Negro Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1965), p. XXVIII.
10. Ibid., p. 29.
11. Ibid., p. 49.
12. Ibid., p. 41.
13. E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Family in the United States (Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 225.
14. Rainwater and Yancey, op. cit., p. 360.
15. Frazier, op. cit., p. 229.
16. Ibid., p. 230.
17. Cronon, op. cit., p. 3.

18. Ibid., p. 170.
19. Ibid., p. 63.
20. George Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, Racial and Cultural Minorities (3rd ed.) (New York, New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 159.
21. Ibid., p. 62.
22. Thomas Pettigrew, Profile of the American Negro (Princeton, New Jersey: Van Nostrand Company, Inc. 1964), p. 9.
23. Ibid., p. 6.
24. Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1963) p. 4-5.
25. Cronon, op. cit., p. 41. "Mulattoes" as used in this section actually refers to American Negroes of mixed ancestry, regardless of degree of admixture.
26. Charles Silberman, Crisis in Black and White (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1964), p. 138.
27. Ibid., p. 54.
28. Glazer and Moynihan, op. cit., p. 52-53.
29. Garfinkel, op. cit., p. 128.
30. Heywood Burns, The Voices of Negro Protest in America (New York, New York: Oxford University Press. 1963), p. 43-44.
31. Ibid., p. 44.
32. Rainwater and Yancey, op. cit., p. 5.
33. Pettigrew, op. cit., p. 198.
34. Carmichael and Hamilton, op. cit., p. 44.
35. Glazer and Moynihan, op. cit., p. 33.
36. Rainwater and Yancey, op. cit., p. 130.
37. Ibid.
38. Frazier, op. cit., p. 73.
39. Liebow, op. cit., p. 129-130.
40. Glazer and Moynihan, op. cit., p. 79.

41. Carmichael and Hamilton, op. cit., p. 62.
42. Glazer and Moynihan, op. cit., p. 78.
43. Ibid., p. 78.
44. Cronon, op. cit., p. 3.
45. Kenneth Clark, "The Search for Identity," Ebony, volume 22 (August, 1967) pp. 39-42.
46. Two notable exceptions are Daniel Thompson, Negro Leadership Class. (Englewood Cliff, New Jersey: Spectrum and Prentice-Hall, 1963.) And M. Elaine Burgess, Negro Leadership in a Southern City. (New Haven, Connecticut: College and University Press, 1962, 1964.)
47. Silberman, op. cit., p. 123.
48. Thompson, op. cit., p. 108-109.
49. Said to author during a family visit, December, 1962.
50. Aaron Waldavsky, "The Empty-Head Blues: Black Rebellion and White Reaction," The Public Interest, no. 11, (Spring, 1968) pp 3-16.
- 51 Gary Marx, "Race & Self: Tolerance and Militancy," The Nation, volume 206, (February 12, 1968) pp 210-12.
52. Said to author during a Chicago Conference of black students.
53. Langston Hughes, from The Panther and the Lash (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. 1967.)

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